

Remarks

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the remarks below.

Claims 1-29 are pending, of which claims 1, 13, and 20 are independent claims. Claims 1-29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0187415 (Kudo '415).

Applicants thank Examiner Hand for the courtesy of a brief telephone conference on December 15, 2006. As discussed, Applicants have amended claims 1, 13, and 20 to recite that the outwardly visible characteristics are "at least two selected from the group consisting of non-white colors, shapes, and designs." Examiner Hand graciously indicated that the present amendment would be entered and would define the claimed invention over the cited reference.

For at least the preceding reasons, Applicants respectfully assert that the present application is in complete condition for allowance and favorable action, therefore, is respectfully requested. Should any issues remain after consideration of this amendment, then Examiner Hand is invited and encouraged to telephone the undersigned at her convenience. If any fee not accounted for above is required for entry of this Amendment or papers filed herewith, authorization is hereby granted to charge such fee to Deposit Account No. 04-1403. If any petition is required for entry, such petition is hereby made and any associated fees may also be charged to our deposit account.

December 18, 2006

Respectfully submitted,



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